

Greenwich BME Forum

23rd February, 2011

11am – 1pm, Clockhouse Community Centre

MINUTES

Present:

34 people attended, representing 31 organisations – see attendee list

1. **Working in Collaboration** - Jo Deverson (GAVS, BME Forum Steering Committee)

- One of objectives of the Greenwich BME Forum, and included in the BME Forum Action Plan 2010, is to 'increase collaboration amongst BME groups, and between BME groups and other organisations and statutory agencies on common goals, services, funding or resources'.
- Participants gave the following reasons as to why collaboration is important and useful:
 - Complement professional service delivery
 - Share best practice
 - Share new ideas
 - Combining skills and expertise
 - Improves access to services
 - Capacity building
 - Funders encourage it
 - Identify needs
 - Breakdown barriers – know cultural values
 - Exchanging, swapping information
 - Sharing funding and resources
 - Building social capital – improves health
 - Expanding horizons, explore
 - Current economic climate – pool limited resources
 - Big Society – joint bids for tenders and contracts

2. **Southall Community Alliance (SCA)** – Suki Kaur, BMER Fundraising & Development Worker

Suki gave examples of how BME organisations in Southall have worked together – sharing office resources, joint projects and joint funding, joint activities, stronger advocacy. This has particularly helped smaller groups who may not have been able to achieve these things on their own.

Suki described the positive benefits from collaboration, the process of how groups came to collaborate and some of the challenges of collaborative work.

Further details about SCA: www.southallcommunityalliance.com
Email: southallcommunityalliance@hotmail.com Tel: 020 8574 8855

Participants' questions and feedback to Suki, certainly showed that SCA's experience can provide BME groups in Greenwich with some good examples and learning on collaborative work. JD thanked Suki on behalf of the BME Forum for her excellent presentation and for sharing SCA's work and success with us.

3. Greenwich BME Groups – collaborative working

Examples were given of BME groups in Greenwich who are already collaborating eg:

- BME women's groups (Nepali, Bangladesh, Tamil, Somali groups coming together on health training and cultural activities, facilitated by the Her Centre)
- African Health Network – offering shared office space
- Somali Teaching Group – offer BEMA-D use of their room
- Greenwich BME Forum activities – representing BME groups' views to service providers

Future collaboration examples/possibilities given:

- Stephen Lawrence Trust Centre – pc and other facilities & rooms available for BME groups. CV, ESOL services too.
- ESOL – joint project/classes/funding bid? EDCN and FETCO have expressed interest.
- BME Older People – see below
- Translation of documents
- Supplementary Schools - Chris at GAVS will be working with ContinYou and Greenwich Supplementary schools on this.

4. Update from BME Steering Committee

Further details are in the BME Bulletin

Employment (Ramesh - Walpole Estate, BME Steering Committee Employment lead)

- BME Employment workshop took place 17th Feb. Participants met the JCP Outreach team and received information on the new benefits/work schemes. Participants gave positive feedback and said they felt more confident to refer BME clients to the Outreach team for employment support. Languages available.
- Next meeting between JCP, GLLaB and BME Forum reps (Jo&Ramesh) 4th April.

Health (Zainab – GCRE, BME Steering Committee Health lead)

- 7th Feb Zainab and Jo met with Dr Eugenia Lee – GP Consortia Board to discuss how BME views will be represented in the new GP Consortia
- 7th Feb, Z & J met with Jo Mant from NHS to discuss concerns on language services for patients and GP surgery awareness & sensitivity.

- Meetings between BME Forum reps (Zainab&Jo), NHS, Oxleas, LINK, AOPS continue.
- BME Forum workshop planned for 29th March for BME groups on information/signposting on health services.

Older People (Eleanor – Advocacy for Older People, BME Forum Older People lead)

- Planning workshop for 14th March for BME groups working with older people.

Housing

- Jo met with Council Resettlement Team in Jan. They are keen to link more with BME groups.

Children & Education

- Youth Crime meeting planned for 9th March (follow up to recommendations from Nov Forum). Contact Jo or Chris at GAVS for details
- ContinYou hope to receive funding for someone to support Supplementary Schools in Greenwich – they will be working closely with GAVS on this.

BME Action Plan

2010 plan will be reviewed by the Committee and 2011 Plan drafted for discussion at the next Forum in May.

5. Notices

- Superhighways: are offering a free ICT package worth £300-£500 to a BME group who can answer question – deadline 4th March for entry to competition
- ESOL: FECTO can offer ESOL to groups. Looking for a partner and venue.
- VEG – Volunteer Education Group, are network of groups who work with children with special needs and their families. Education, respite etc. They would like to have BME representation. Contact Julie Raven julie316r@hotmail.co.uk
- Eaves Housing for Women have 'Moving On Up' – Guide to Living on your own' in lots of different languages. Contact Kristin Thomas from Eaves for copies post@eaveshousing.co.uk 020 7735 2062
- Jo checked everyone receives BME Bulletin

Next BME Forum – Wed 25th May 2011